

A Doll's Christmas

.....By LAWTON JOHNSON

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A Quaint Tale of Life in the Nursery When Little Boys and Girls Are All Sound Asleep

ONE Christmas eve a wax doll sat on a chair in a pretty room in which a number of children were in bed. A fire was burning on the hearth. Stockings were hanging to the mantel to be filled with toys for the children who were sleeping soundly, doubtless dreaming of what they were to receive in the morning. The face of one of them, a delicate fair-haired boy, was turned toward the doll, and she did not tire looking at it, for the face, though pale and thin, was very delicately molded.

On the mantel were two figures in porcelain. One was a boy in an old-fashioned coat and knee breeches, with a sash around his waist and a cocked hat and feather. His right hand was thrust into his coat in front, and he looked like a figure of Napoleon. The other was a girl, with a short dress and a sailor's hat. Her head was poised one side, and she looked very well satisfied with herself. Indeed, she was very pretty.

"How do you do?" said the girl, smiling to the doll. "Don't you think this a pleasant room?"

"Indeed it is, but I've not seen many, I was only born—" She paused to think again when she was born, but couldn't remember, so she said instead, "Isn't it a beautiful world?"

"Do you think so?" said the boy. "My sister and I have had a hard time getting into it. We were baked in a furnace, and it was so hot!"

"Well, don't tell me about it," interrupted the doll. "I'd rather hear about pleasant places."

The figures told her a great many things, but the girl was very vain of her beauty, and the boy was taken up with what he knew about the world, of which the doll knew nothing at all, so she didn't listen long, but fell asleep while they were talking.

Suddenly she awoke with a start. What was that noise in the chimney? She had scarcely time to think about it when out on the hearth popped up the figure in fur. He unstrapped a pack he carried and filled all the stockings with toys. Then he jumped back into the chimney and was gone in a twinkling. This set the doll to wondering more than ever.

Everything was again silent except the clock, which ticked very loud. There were the children asleep in bed, the little pale-faced boy with his head resting on his arm, the doll alone on the mantel with her head on one side thinking how pretty she was and the boy thinking how much he knew about the world. The doll soon went to sleep again.

In the morning she was awakened by a shouting. The children were running about in their night clothes, taking their toys from their stockings and chattering like monkeys. The fair-haired boy sat up in bed and looked on, for he was too delicate to get up like the other children. The doll noticed that he had great blue eyes, which seemed ever so large as he looked wonderingly at all that was going on. Then there came a knocking on the wall, and the children knew that it was a signal for them to get back to bed and not take cold, and back they scrambled, tugging and tussling over one another, and covered themselves up.

Promised the father and mother came in and distributed the toys. The doll was for one of the girls, but the boy insisted on having it himself. Then when all were loaded with presents they carried them down to the breakfast room.

What a day it was! The children were racing about, playing with their toys, and people were coming in continually to see the presents, and the sun shone brightly on the snow outside, and the fire shone brightly within on the brass andirons and tender, and after dinner stories were told the children till they were all astonished by the number of wonderful things that happen. The boy with the light hair and blue eyes lay in his mother's arms, hugging the doll with his breast pressed against his, so that she could hear his heart beat, and she wondered why there was no such beating in her own heart. This was the happiest moment she had ever known. She was only a day old, but something told her that nothing in the world could ever make her happier.

When the children went upstairs the boy insisted on keeping the stool by him till he got into bed, when his mother persuaded him to part with it till morning. She placed it on a chair before the fire where he could see it till he should go to sleep and the first sign on awakening in the morning.

When the children were all asleep the doll looked up from the chair at the images on the mantel. She was happy to go to sleep.

"What a lovely day I have had," she said.

"Just wait," replied the boy image, "till you have been knocked about the world awhile and you'll see." He looked as wise as an owl.

"I think it very nice," said the girl image, "so long as you are young and pretty, but I don't like the idea of getting old and cracked, perhaps having my arms or legs broken off."

The wind was rising without, and suddenly the fire blazed with a cheerful warmth. It was very pleasant for awhile, but presently it seemed to be

too hot. The doll thought she began to feel a softening in her feet. She didn't know what it meant, but it frightened her. It extended to her legs; then she fell in her arms and at last in her face and neck. A log of wood fell down on the coals, and the fire blazed higher, hotter than ever. The doll felt herself melting away.

"You're going," said the boy figure on the mantel. "It's just as well; the world isn't all like this household."

"It's just as well," echoed the girl image. "Your beauty will not have to fade."

"I don't want to go," cried the doll mournfully. "I want to stay with my blue-eyed boy. The world may be full of sadness, but there must be pleasure as well, for it is here."

There was something so plaintive in her voice that even the images refrained from any further remarks. The fire blazed hotter, and the wax, which had as yet only softened, began to melt. Something spattered on the floor. It was a drop of melted wax.

Oh, that her little boy would get up and move her back from the fire! But he slept on peacefully, and as she had no voice for real children she couldn't call to him.

So the doll felt that she was melting away. Drop by drop she fell on the floor. The room, with its rich hangings, the children sleeping, the firelight flickering, the shadows and, above all, the memory of her brief existence—for, after all, a doll can only exist—seemed to be gradually fading away. She sighed to think that she couldn't have been born with a soul, to be loved and go on loving forever; that she could not grow up like a real child to see the unfolding of all the wonderful things in the world, passing from one existence to another instead of going out altogether. Then she thought that she might never have been born at all, never have had the one glimpse of the happy household, the one Christmas, the blue-eyed boy and her single day of love. So she said: "I can't understand it. I will try not to murmur, but trust that it is all for the best."

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And then—and then she awoke! The horror of melting had only been a dream. She had fallen asleep before the hot fire, but some kind hand had drawn the chair back, and in a few moments she was again clasped in the fond arms of her blue-eyed boy.

CHRISTMAS IN MEXICO.

How the Day is Celebrated in the Land of Diaz.

In Mexico Christmas eve is observed, as in Spain, with the Noche Buena. The streets and plazas are thronged with people. Of all the shop windows so gay and brilliant in their holiday attire none is so bright as the confectioner's. Nowhere is the confectioner's art carried to a greater perfection. At midnight of the Noche Buena all Mexican factories its pleasures and repasts to the Miss del Gallo, or mass of the cook, a high mass of the most impudent character, which, in every one of the ungodly temples reared by the Catholic church in the City of Mexico, is celebrated exactly at midnight on Christmas eve or morning to commemorate the Saviour's birth. All the churches have an augmented choir and a large orchestra specially engaged for the occasion. The mass is celebrated with every concomitant that heightens its effect and grandeur.

COURT CALENDAR.

CIRCUIT COURT convenes on the third Monday in March, the fourth in June and the third in November.

COUNTY COURT convenes on the second Monday in each month.

QUARTERLY COURT convenes on the fourth Monday in each month.

FISCAL COURT convenes on the first Tuesday in April and October.

Court Officials and County Officers.

CIRCUIT JUDGE—J. F. Gordon.

COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY—Jno. L. Gray.

COUNTY JUDGE—Aaron Towery.

SHERIFF—J. W. Lamb.

COUNTY ATTORNEY—Carl Hender-

son.

CIRCUIT CLERK—John G. Asher.

COUNTY CLERK—C. E. Weldon.

ASSISTANT—G. T. Bell.

JAILER—A. H. Travis.

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT—Jno. B. Paris.

CORONER—W. A. Haleman.

STEVENS—J. E. Sullinger.

MAGISTRATES.

J. R. Postlethwait, precinct No. 1.

G. F. Williams, No. 2.

T. P. Hard, No. 3.

T. M. LaRue, No. 4.

P. C. Moore, No. 5.

Geo. D. Hughes, No. 6.

L. B. Phillips, No. 7.

T. M. Dean, No. 8.

NORTH BOUND.

Leave Princeton, No. 322.

Arrive Marion, 7:00 a. m.

Sturgis, 7:30 a. m.

Morenci, 8:00 a. m.

Henderson, 8:30 a. m.

Evanston, 9:00 a. m.

SOUTH BOUND.

Leave Marion, No. 321.

Arrive Evansville, 6:30 a. m.

Henderson, 7:00 a. m.

Sturgis, 7:30 a. m.

Marion, 8:00 a. m.

Princeton, 8:30 a. m.

Hopkinsville, 9:00 a. m.

Bethel, 9:30 a. m.

Church Directory.

METHODIST CHURCH.

PASTOR, J. R. McGahee.
PRAEACHING, every Sunday at 11 a. m.
SUNDAY SCHOOL, every Sunday at 9:30 a. m.
PRAYER MEETING every Wednesday night.

BAPTIST CHURCH.

PASTOR, REV. T. A. Conway.
PRAEACHING, 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11 a. m. and at night.
SERMON AND BURNT MEETING 2nd Saturday night.
SUNDAY SCHOOL every Sunday at 9:30 a. m.
PRAYER MEETING every Thursday night.

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN.

PASTOR, REV. J. F. Price.
PRAEACHING, 1st and 3rd Sundays in each month.
SUNDAY SCHOOL opens at 9:30 a. m. every Sunday.

TEACHERS' MEETING is held at church every Tuesday at 8 p. m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN.

PASTOR, REV. S. J. Martin.
PRAEACHING, 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays and nights.

SUNDAY SCHOOL, every Sunday at 9:30 a. m.
PRAYER MEETING every Wednesday night.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

PASTOR, Elder H. A. McDonald, Cadiz, Ky.

PRAEACHING, 2nd and 3rd Sundays in each month at 11 a. m. and at night.
SUNDAY SCHOOL every Sunday at 9:30 a. m.

OUTSIDE APPOINTMENTS OF OUR LOCAL PREACHERS.

Rev. S. J. Martin, 2nd Sunday and night, Tolosa; 6th Sunday, ...

Rev. T. A. Conway, 3rd Sunday, Rock Springs.

Rev. W. T. Oakley, 1st Sunday, Mt. Carmel; 2nd Sunday, Bell's Mines; 3rd Sunday, Sugar Grove; 4th Sunday, Cranberry.

Rev. U. G. Hughes, 1st Sunday, Emmaus Church; 2nd, Sugar Creek; 3rd, Baker Church; 4th, Old Salem.

Rev. T. C. Carter, 1st Sunday, Pond Fork; 2nd, Sunday, Kuttawa; 3rd, Pineyeville, 4th, Salem.

Rev. E. H. Blackton, 1st Sunday, Dolson; 2nd Sunday, Walnut Grove; 4th, Crooked Creek.

Rev. Jas. F. Price, 2nd Sunday, Lismore; 4th Sunday, Sullivan.

Rev. G. H. Hughes, 1st Sunday, Emmaus Church; 2nd, Sugar Creek; 3rd, Baker Church; 4th, Old Salem.

Rev. T. H. Kevel, 1st Sunday, Union; 2nd, Dunn Springs; 4th, Shady Grove. Services held both Saturday and Sunday.

Lodge Directory.

BIGHAM LODGE NO. 256 F. & A. M.

Regular meeting in Masonic Hall Saturday before full moon in each month.

Visiting members are invited to attend.

C. E. Nunn, W. M. J. B. Kevel, Sec'y.

CRITTENDEN CHAPTER NO. 26.

Meets Saturday night after full moon in each month.

P. C. Stephens, H. P. J. B. Kevel, Sec'y.

WINGATE COUNCIL NO. 25.

Meets 2nd Monday night in each month.

J. G. Gilbert, T. L. M. J. B. Kevel, Sec'y.

BLACKWELL LODGE NO. 21. KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS.

Meets in K. of P. Hall every Friday night from October to April inclusive, and 2nd and 4th Friday nights from May to September inclusive.

All visiting members of sister lodges are invited to attend.

Wm. A. Binge, Chancellor Commander, Sandy Adams, K. H. and R.

MARION LODGE NO. 60. A. O. U. W.

Meets 1st and 3rd Monday nights in Masonic Hall.

J. B. Braswell, M. W. B. L. Wilson, Recorder.

ROSEWOOD CAMP, NO. 22. W. O. W.

Lodge meets in Masonic Hall the 2nd and 4th Tuesday nights in each month. All visiting members are invited to attend.

W. H. Clark, Com. Con. S. H. Bassett, Sec'y.

CITY GOVERNMENT.

J. W. Blue, Jr., MAYOR.

J. B. Kevel, JUDGE.

J. C. Bourland, CLERK.

H. K. Woods, TREASURER.

Jno. A. Moore, ATTORNEY.